

## Mrs. Stephanie Dagenais' 4<sup>th</sup> Graders Enjoy Lessons on "The Everglades" Taught by Mrs. Donna Taylor (NASA Educator Astronaut Teacher)

Mrs. Stephanie Dagenais' students recently enjoyed participating in a series of Science-based interdisciplinary lessons on "The Everglades," taught by Mrs. Donna Taylor, and assisted by Mrs.



**Dagenais!** Mrs. Taylor - a licensed Science teacher who also has also attained the honor of being named a National Board Certified teacher - adapted the lessons from a curriculum she originally designed for her middle school students when she taught in Florida. The students really enjoyed learning about this amazing region of our country through a series of "hands-on" learning experiences over the course of two days. We really appreciate Mrs. Taylor sharing these wonderful instructional activities with our students! Here's a recap of what the students did:

**Day One: Science** – Celery Experiment (Left) – Students put freshly cut celery sticks in red water to see what would happen. The next day, they saw that the red dye had risen to the top of the celery stalk! A class discussion ensued regarding the importance of plants in cleaning the water in our environment.

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Left: Jack Nasuti, Joseph Lafortune,, and Hannah Rosenkrantz

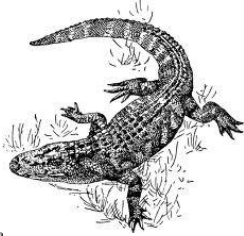


**2) Reading** - *The Lorax* – Students read the story, *The Lorax*, and discussed the Oncler's decision about cutting the Truffula trees. The students were then asked what they would do if they were given the last Truffula seed. They were then given a "magical seed" to plant and "water." When they returned to the classroom from their Related Arts specials, the seeds had magically sprouted into mini Truffula trees for the students to take home! (Left)



(Far Left) Ben Garland and (Left) Lauren Flanagan

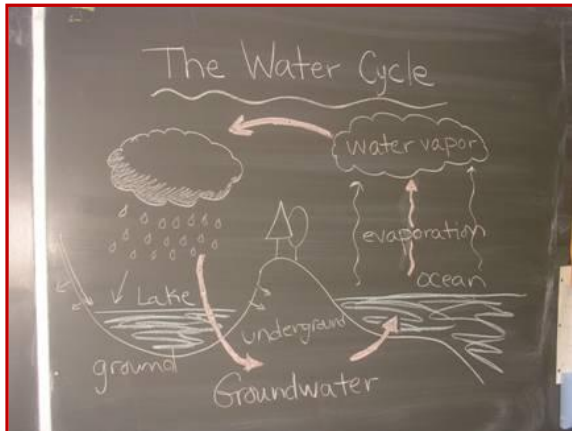
**3) Geography** – (Below) Students located both Douglas, MA and Florida on a map and discussed several differences between the two locations.



(Right)  
Lucas  
Rindone  
and  
Matthew  
Conner



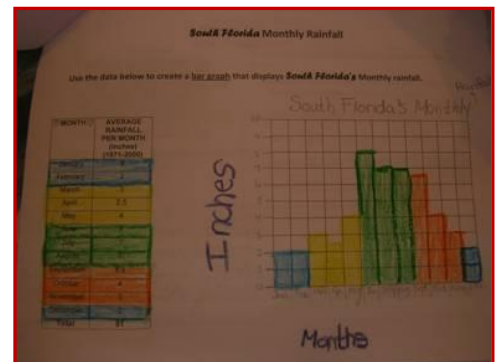
**4) Science** - The Water Cycle – (Below) The students identified and discussed the parts of the water cycle with their groups. They then made a water cycle wheel which they took home to share with their families.



(Right) Katie Brown



**5) Math/Science** –  
(Below Right)  
Next, students  
created seasonally  
color-coded bar  
graph of South  
Florida's Monthly  
rainfall.



Sage Hurteau's Graph



**Day Two: 6) Math/Science** – (Below) The class used a line graph to compare the average monthly rainfall in Douglas to the average monthly rainfall in South Florida. The students had difficulty grasping what an "average" was, so Mrs. Dagenais and Mrs. Taylor collaborated to come up with a hands-on block activity that really helped them with this concept!



**7) Science** – Students discussed the plants and animals of the Everglades and how they have special adaptations to help them live in this very wet environment. They also looked at images in the *Everglades Newspaper* and online.



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**8) Science** – The class then identified animals of the Everglades as Herbivores, Omnivores, or Carnivores and created food chains.

**9) Geography/History** – Finally, the class discussed the Everglades of the Past, Present and Future. The students learned that humans have made some poor choices (much like the Oncler in the Lorax story), and that they are learning from those choices and figuring out how to make South Florida a better place for the plants, animals and people. It's clear from the pictures that the students enjoyed this special series of lessons, and learned a lot in the process!



(Above) Sage Hurteau